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manuscripts faithfully represented his manner of working. Regularity, order, finish in details were carried in them to a most unusual degree. The writing, always perfectly plain, read like print; a curious example of the harmony which is said often to exist between the manner of writing and the character of a person." Meissner was fond of music, of literature, and of friendly intercourse, and was of that kind and considerate character which the writer emphasizes by using the English word *gentleman*. A list of Meissner's writings is given, and an account of the fate of his library and herbarium. In reference to the transfer of the latter to Columbia College, the illustrious author gives a kindly hint to us: "The Torrey Botanical Club meet there; consequently the herbarium has fallen into good hands and will certainly be utilized.—2. *Zur Kenntnis einiger Lycpodinen*, von F. Hegelmaier, Tübingen, July, 1874.—3. *Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte monokotyledoner Keime nebst Bemerkungen über die Bildung der Samendeckel*, von E. Hegelmaier. Mit Tafeln. From the Botanische Zeitung, Nos. 39—44, 1874.

§ 18. **Rhus versus Cyripedium.**—None of our Cyripediums are poisonous plants, applied either externally or internally. They are much employed by Eclectic Physicians of this country, and, though tons of these plants are annually brought to this market to be manufactured into Extract, Tincture, or "Cypropedin," I have yet to be informed of the first case of poisoning, the result of handling the fresh plant or otherwise.

I am very susceptible to the effects of *Rhus*, even from contact of the stems in winter or when quite dry. Others are liable to be poisoned from the emanations of the plant at long distances without coming into contact with it. Some others still have a periodical return of the symptoms of such poisoning recurring for a number of years thereafter.

R. E. KUNZE, M.D.

[We have, ourselves, known cases of the periodical return of the *Rhus* irritation in persons who had handled the plant when brought into the city, but who avoided doing so a second time, and were not likely to go where it grew.—Eps.]

§ 19. **Errata.**—p. 15, l. 5, for "sub-order" read "sub-genus": l. 6, for *Chanactis* read *Chenactis*. In the list of Mr. Paine's Palestine plants, *Habenaria tridentata*, Scopoli, should doubtless read *Orchis tridentata*, Scopoli. As regards the missing pages we intend to supply them hereafter.

§ 20.

A MARCH RAMBLE.

Let us search the brown woods ere the March winds are laid,
Ere the flower-buds swell, and the leaves cast a shade.
To the lover of nature they ever display
Such treasures as well for the seeking repay;
And now, though so dreary and lifeless they seem,
We shall find that with myriad beauties they teem.
Where the shadows lie deepest, the frost lingers yet,
And out to the meadows he steals at sunset;
But sooner each morn the sun puts him to flight,
And quickly unbinds what he bound in the night.
On north hill-sides the ice-bearded cliffs are yet dripping,
And sunbeams from lingering snow-banks are sipping.

Each effort of summer the winter withstands,
 And checks every bud that too early expands.
 It would seem the most desolate time of the year,
 If we knew not that nature's new birth were so near.
 A few pendant leaves rustle withered and sere,
 Only making the forest more death-like appear.
 Overhead, 'mongst the whispering branches are heard
 Æolian melodies, mournful and weird.
 And swaying and creaking, the lonely trees seem
 To be mourning the loss of their leafage so green,
 Which the sullen old year with his autumn blasts beat
 From their branches and downward cast dead at their feet.
 Yet, though robbed of their summer adornments, how grand
 In their massive proportions the forest trees stand !
 Moored deep in the earth, still erect are their forms,
 Though against them have beaten a thousand wild storms.
 And the ponderous arches of nature's own shrine
 Spring upward with never a keystone to bind,
 Supporting, it seems, the blue dome overhead,
 Against which the branchlets like tracery spread.
 But our minds need not dwell on such fancies alone,
 When around us in wildest profusion are strewn
 The treasures of nature, more wondrously wrought
 Than those that 'neath Ormus' dark waters are sought ;
 More marvellous beauty lies hidden in them
 Than men toil to unprison from India's rough gem.
 Their cost is the seeking, a glance of the eye
 On the shadowy sides of the tree trunks close by,
 Which dial each sunshiny hour on the ground ;
 And where point the shadows, there too, are they found ;
 On yonder gray rocks, on all things that decay,
 The mosses and lichens their beauties display.
 And the fungi, so queer and fantastic, are seen
 In every shape, of all colors but green.
 Here, springing from stumps old and rotting, are shelves,
 Brown, scarlet, or white, as if built by the elves ;
 There cushions and stools are strewn over the ground,
 And puff-balls and earth-stars are scattered around.
 Some like nests filled with eggs, or like vases appear,
 And others like corals or antlers of deer,
 Fallen branches and leaves it delights them to deck
 With curious patterns, perhaps a mere speck,
 Or broad-spreading wart of the cankerous *Sphæria*,
 Or a velvety carpet unrolled by the *Sterea*—
 Most delicate lace-work—or *Irpex*'s frill,
 To imitate which would defy human skill.
 The recluses of nature, they love best to dwell
 In the dark and damp woods, like the monk in his cell.
 The mosses and lichens, too, love the damp shade,
 And the wet, frosty season, when other plants fade.
 All shrivelled and crisp through the summer they lie,
 As if dead, while the gay, floral train passes by ;
 But when touched by the autumn's white crystalline dew

Which blights their proud rivals, again they renew
 Their mysterious growth, which so little men heed,
 And again, in a way of their own, bloom and seed.
 What tree or what herb, be it ever so fair,
 Can in exquisite grace with the mosses compare?
 The feathery Hypnum's rich tapestries spread
 And many-hued mats, soft as down to the tread.
 Wide o'er cold bogs spreads the pallid peat moss;
 Fontinalis' green tresses the mountain-streams toss;
 The emerald Bryum on moist, shady banks
 Unfolds its rosettes, and here, too, in close ranks,
 The troops of Dicranum are tilting their lances,
 And the Liliput fruit of Bartramia dances
 In each passing breeze: all these tiny green spheres
 Are caskets of moss-seed—mere dust it appears,
 But all vital with life—but as yet it is hid
 By a cunningly fitted, and bossed little lid;
 While above this a veil, too transparent to hide,
 Rests lightly, as over the head of a bride.
 But in quaintness of structure, the lichens outvie
 All else that in nature rejoices the eye—
 All sober in color, but varied in form,
 From the Graphis, whose tracings the tree-trunks adorn,
 As with Arabic writing or outlines of maps,
 To the ugly rock-tripe that on yonder cliff flaps.
 From old branches the pendent gray Usnea sways,
 While upon them the graceful Parmelia displays
 Its parterres with curved paths, which the pixies might tread,
 And gay little seed-beds, brown, orange, and red.
 And here, on this knoll, which the wind has swept clean,
 The Cladonia's whimsical structures are seen.
 One resembles a balconied minaret tall,
 Or a ruined old castle just ready to fall;
 And another seems most, with its flame-colored tip,
 Like a beacon-fire such as the old Normans lit.
 And those that like delicate corals appear
 Are the favorite food of the Arctic reindeer.
 But the daylight is fading, the sunbeams slant low,
 And fainter and fainter the long shadows grow.
 Beneath the horizon the sun sinks from view,
 And let us, with him, to the scene bid adieu,
 And leave buried in shade through the sombre night hours
 The murmuring forest and all its embowers.

ALLEN H. CURTISS.

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The Club meets regularly the last Tuesday of the month in the Herbarium, Columbia College
 at 7½ P. M. Botanists are invited to attend. DR. THURBER, the President of the Club,
 may be found at 245 Broadway.